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ABSTRACT

After introductory material noting the decreased popularity of religious studies and other humanities courses in the wake of dwindling enrollments, fiscal constraints, and the growing demand for non-transfer, vocational education, this paper reviews the development of religious studies curricula at the California community colleges during the 1970's. The paper first discusses influential trends at senior institutions, including the establishment of Departments of Religion at the University of California (UC) and the California State Universities (CSU). Surveys of the community college system in 1963-64, 1972-73, and 1980-81 are then reviewed to document the steady growth in the number and variety of religious studies courses offered. After comparing this data with national trends, the paper discusses the variety of introductory religious studies courses offered at the community colleges. It goes on to compare the merits of departmental and interdepartmental modes of administering these courses and to examine the use of these administrative modes within the UC, CSU, and community college systems. A discussion follows of the topics which are receiving increasing attention in community college religious studies curricula. The report concludes with an examination of the history and characteristics of the religious studies program offered at San Bernardino Valley College, California. (JP)

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RELIGIOUS STUDIES PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES DURING THE NINETEEN SEVENTIES.

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1980

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RELIGIOUS STUDIES PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA'S
COMMUNITY COLLEGES DURING THE NINETEEN SEVENTIES

For the most part, educators began the seventies with an optimism sustained from the sixties, a period of remarkable expansion in higher education. During the sixties, most campuses experienced a growth in student enrollments with corresponding increases in faculty positions. From 1960-1969, enrollments in California's public colleges and universities grew by 108%. Religious studies programs prospered in this decade of growth, particularly in public institutions where the Supreme Court's decision in the Schempp case in 1963 was regarded as providing a judicial and constitutional legitimacy for the academic study of religion in public education. During the period 1964-69, religious studies enrollments in public colleges and universities and in private non-sectarian institutions grew nationwide even more rapidly than did total undergraduate enrollments.[1]

The expansiveness with which the seventies began was shattered by changes in the economy and in the student population. Sharp increases in the price of oil, inflation, and other economic factors simultaneously increased the costs of operating educational programs and diminished sources of financial support for both private and public colleges. Higher education's economic woes have been com-

pounded by a declining birth rate that has shrunk the pool of available high school graduates. The latter has contributed to a slowing down in the growth rate of student enrollments.

In addition to economic troubles and a declining rate of enrollments, another source of instability in higher education during the seventies stemmed from a shift in student interests, attitudes, and career objectives. Student watchers agree that the student activism of the sixties, an activism fueled by presidential appeals for Americans to transcend self-interest, has given way to a preference of students for educational programs that prepare them for economic survival. Although the factors that have contributed to this shift in student attitudes are complex, economic ones have had the most discernible effect on higher education. For example, the expansion of career opportunities in business, vocational, and para-professional fields accompanied by a decline in available teaching positions has made the employment of graduates in the humanities and social sciences more problematic -- a condition that is most evident in the number of graduate students who cannot find a position in their area of concentration simply because there are more candidates than there are jobs.

Changes in the job market have affected college programs in a number of ways and nowhere has the impact been greater than in the humanities and social sciences.

For example, the number of English literature majors declined nationwide by 38% during the seventies, and the number of baccalaureate degrees awarded in the humanities and social sciences by the California state college and university system dropped from 19,046 in 1972-73 to 11,385 in 1976-77.[2] The decline of majors in these areas translates into a loss of enrollment; thus, while the overall student population continues to modestly increase, there are departments and programs with declining or static enrollments. The decline of students in traditional academic majors has been accompanied by an increase in the percentage of community college students in vocational programs during the period 1965-1976. A drop in the number of two-year college students transferring to public senior colleges in California may also be evidence of the shift from academic transfer majors to non-transfer career education.[3]

While I do not have adequate national data on enrollments in religious studies, there is some evidence that most programs, like those in other areas of the humanities, have since 1976-77 either experienced a loss of students or a sharp dip in their growth rate.[4] Certainly, this is true of enrollments in both philosophy and religious studies at San Bernardino Valley College, the program in which I am involved. Naturally there are programs that continue to be expansive, but they are probably exceptions rather than the norm.

Although faculty in religious studies programs begin the eighties with some trepidation, it should not obscure the fact that the seventies was a period of rapid expansion of religious studies in California's public community colleges when measured by the number of colleges with courses in religion and by the dramatic increase in both the number and variety of courses available. The fact that this growth of religious studies came at a time when the pinch was already beginning in other areas of the humanities is, in part, a consequence of the very underdeveloped status of religious studies in community colleges prior to the seventies.

The focus of this report is on the development of religious studies in California's community colleges during the seventies. It entails a look at the number of colleges that have religious studies programs and the kinds of courses that are offered. It also examines departmental and interdepartmental models for developing and administering such programs and concludes with some remarks about the program at San Bernardino Valley College. A good place to begin is with some of the ways senior college programs in religious studies have influenced those in the community colleges.

The Influence of Senior College Religious Studies Programs on Community College Programs

During the sixties, changes in the study of religion at both public and private senior colleges had profound con-

sequences for the study of religion in public community colleges. Ironically, while constitutional considerations respecting the relationship of church and state and distinctions between indoctrination and study were being resolved in a fashion that provided an impetus for the introduction of the academic study of religion in public colleges and universities, many liberal Protestant and Catholic colleges were dropping or reducing religion as a required course of study for a baccalaureate degree. The swing of the sixties in curriculum was away from specific course requirements to general education and breadth requirements that granted students more latitude in determining their academic programs. The move to drop required courses in religion as well as compulsory chapel attendance was part of this larger picture. As a result, liberal Protestant and Catholic colleges as well as public colleges developed, for somewhat different reasons, non-coercive religious studies programs based on a voluntary student selection process.

In addition to the dropping of coercive requirements in religion, a liberal ethos was operative among religion faculty at mainline Protestant colleges that facilitated a shift from Christian studies to religious studies, from a confessional mode to a non-confessional one. Departments of religion predicated on the Christian model of faith

seeking understanding, the deepening of faith and the preparation of pre-seminarians, gradually gave way to an academic study of religion that entailed a rational scrutiny of a wide range of religious phenomena including a serious study of non-Christian traditions. As liberal Protestant colleges were in the process of deemphasizing their Christian affiliations and faculty in religion at both church-related and public colleges were experiencing their personal version of what John Hick[5] has called a Copernican theological revolution, that is, a shift from a Christian-centered to a God or ultimate focus centered study of religious traditions, a shift that embraces religious pluralism, a counter-movement of evangelical Christians emerged that seeks either to re-Christianize the colleges or to create new evangelical colleges that are antithetical to religious pluralism and what they regard as secular humanism.

While changes in church related colleges have had ramifications for California's public community colleges, the most momentous influence was provided by the development of departments or programs in religious studies at public colleges and universities. In 1964, the University of California at Santa Barbara initiated the first department of religious studies in a California public university. This precedence was followed by the creation of a department of religious studies at the California State University

in Northridge, formerly San Fernando Valley State College, in 1968. Both the legitimacy and success of what was occuring at Santa Barbara and Northridge stimulated the spread of religious studies programs to other public campuses so that in 1980, 6 of 8 University of California campuses had programs or departments that lead to a bacculaureate degree in religious studies and 15 of 19 campuses in the state college and university system had programs or departments including nine that offer either a major or a concentration in religious studies.

The Seventies: A Period of Growth of Religious Studies in California's Community Colleges

Since academic transfer programs in California's community colleges are primarily a reflection of what is regarded as legitimate at the senior colleges, the formal introduction of an academic study of religion in the state's senior college and university system was a necessary condition and served as a prototype for the emergence of similar programs in the community colleges. Of course the study of religion was present at both senior and two year colleges in the form of courses in the philosophy of religion and the literature of the Bible long before the formalizing of explicit programs in religious studies. Nevertheless, the legitimizing of religious studies qua religious studies in public senior colleges, signaled by the establishment of

departments or programs and abetted by student interest in the study of religious phenomena, was followed by a sharp rise in the number of programs and courses in religion offered by the community colleges. For example, in 1963-64, the year preceding the creation of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara, 32 of 71 or 45% of California's community colleges catalogued a total of 42 courses in religion. Eight years later, after five of the eight University of California campuses and nine of the nineteen California state colleges and universities had initiated programs or departments in religious studies, the community college picture had changed significantly; thus, in 1972-73, 83 of 93 California community colleges listed a total of 159 courses. The dramatic growth continued so that by 1980-81, 97 of 101 colleges offered one or more courses in religious studies for a catalogue total of 344 classes, a figure that more than doubled the 159 courses listed in 1972.

TABLE ONE

A comparison of four surveys of the study of religion in California's public community colleges that tabulates the number of colleges with courses in religion and the total number of religion courses listed in their catalogues.[6]

Year surveyed	number of colleges surveyed	number with courses in religion	percent of total	total number of religion classes	average number of courses per inst.
1956-57	59	8	13.5		
1963-64	71	32	45.3	42	1.3
1972-73 [7]	93	83	89.2	159	1.9
1980-81	101	97	96.	344	3.5

The remarkable growth in the study of religion in California community colleges in the 1970's is also evident in an increase in the variety of courses available and the number of disciplines or subject-fields involved. In the California survey of 1963-64 conducted by Charles McCoy and Louise Stoltenberg for the California Junior College Association, the 42 courses with religion as their primary subject were distributed in only four subject areas (world religions, Bible, philosophy of religion, and religion and ethics) and in four departments or programs (philosophy, history, English, and humanities). A very limited curriculum was also evident in nationwide surveys by Claude Welch in 1970-71 and C. Freeman Sleeper and Robert Spivey in 1972-73. In the Welch study, the four primary subjects in order of their frequency were Bible, world religions, contemporary beliefs, and the introduction to religion.[8] Two years later, Sleeper and Spivey found that courses in world religions were more commonplace than those in the Bible followed in frequency of distribution by courses in contemporary beliefs, religion in America, introduction to religion, and Christian thought.[9] The 1980-81 survey indicates that the variety of courses available in California's community colleges is significantly greater than it was previously (see Table Two).

TABLE TWO

A distribution of religion courses by subject in three surveys of California public community colleges.

Subjects (courses)	number of courses in 1963-64 survey (71 colleges)	number of courses in 1972-73 survey (93 colleges)	number of courses in 1980-81 survey (101 colleges)
World religions (single term survey)	28	52	68
Western religious traditions	2	19	28
Asian religious traditions	2	22	29
Biblical literature (single term survey)	2	23	51
Jewish Bible (O.T.)	1	3	17
New Testament	1	3	16
Intro. to religion/ Philosophy of religion	2	17	36
Religion in America	0	4	14
Contemporary religious movements and issues	0	1	10
Primitive religions/ Magic and religion	0	2	14
Intro. to Judaism/ History of	0	0	8
Intro. to Talmud	0	0	3
History of Christianity/ Life of Jesus	0	1	7
Islamic Studies	0	0	3
Black religious experience/ Black Church in America	0	1	4
Asian Wisdom/Literature	0	1	3
Yoga and Meditation	0	0	5
Mysticism	0	0	3
Religion and Science	0	1	3
Religion and Ethics	4	0	2
Religion and Culture	0	1	2
Others[10]	0	16	18

Table Two indicates that courses in world religion, whether of the one term survey variety or a two term sequence divided into Asian religious traditions and Western religious traditions, are the most widely distributed in California's community colleges --a condition that has not changed in any of the California surveys. Ninety-two of the 101 schools now offer one or more courses in world religions. In addition to the almost universal distribution of world religions courses, 60 of the 101 colleges offer either a one or two term survey of Biblical literature, a percentage increase from 2% in 1963-64 to 27% in 1972-73 to 59% in 1980-81. The third most widely distributed includes two course titles: introduction to religion and philosophy of religion. They are treated as one subject because, as described in community college catalogues, they are usually similar in content. Subjects next in order of incidence are religion in America, primitive religions here combined with courses that have magic, religion, and witchcraft in their titles, and contemporary religious movements and issues, a course that usually concentrates on new religious movements in America. In addition to these five subjects, there are a number of new subjects in the community college curriculum including those in Jewish Studies and other non-Christian traditions that reflect the nationwide trend of academic programs in religion to move from Christian studies to religious studies and religious pluralism.

When surveys of California community colleges are compared with the nationwide surveys of Welch and Sleeper and Spivey, the data indicates that religious studies is more widely distributed among colleges in California than in the rest of the nation (see Table Three). The California surveys are based on information derived from an examination of college catalogues rather than the surveys of self-responding subjects employed in the nationwide studies. The study of catalogues identified courses in religious studies that those who respond to questionnaires may fail to report and produced evidence of a wider incidence of colleges with courses in religion as well as an increase in the types of courses available.

TABLE THREE

A comparison of two surveys of religion in California with two nationwide surveys of public community colleges.[11]

Surveys	Number of public c.c. surveyed	Number with religion courses	% of total	Total # of courses	Average # of courses per inst with rel courses
Welch, 1970-71	232	97	42	186	1.9
Sleeper/Spivey, 1972-73	380	194	51	nda	nda
Calif. survey, 1972-73	93	83	89	159	1.9
Calif. survey, 1980-81	101	97	96	344	3.5

Introductory Courses in Religion and Departmental and Interdepartmental Patterns of Organization

Although world religions courses are the primary way that California community college students are introduced to the academic study of religion, there still is little unanimity on what a first course ought to entail. An alternative model is emerging, as is evident in course descriptions for the introduction to religion and the philosophy of religion, that concentrates on a study of the primary forms of religious expression (e.g. beliefs, rites, structures) and a wide range of religious phenomena.[12] The lack of agreement on how to introduce students to religion is, in part, indicative of the newness of the study of religion in a secular context.

Professors of religion in public colleges have usually brought to their secular positions both a liberal Protestant background and an academic preparation conditioned by the ways students in church related colleges were introduced to religion -- models that in Protestant colleges began by introducing students to the Bible and in Catholic colleges by introducing them to Christian theology. Neither model is satisfactory for the study of religion in public colleges and universities; consequently, religious studies professors at such colleges have had to create new models for introducing students to religion in a secular and religiously plural context.

A second factor that has hampered the emergence of a concensus first course in religious studies that parallels introductory courses in other disciplines such as philosophy and psychology stems from differences of perspective as to how religious studies programs in public colleges should be organized. Should there be departments of religion staffed by faculty professionally trained in religion or should there be interdepartmental programs in religion that offer students an opportunity to study religion through a wide range of methodologies and departmental structures including those of anthropology, literature, history, philosophy, psychology, and sociology?

Where the interdepartmental approach is operative there are multiple first courses in religion. Where there are departments of religious studies a variety of introductory courses are available, but a first course that introduces students to the primary forms of religious expression and to hermeneutical and methodological considerations is emerging as an alternative to beginning a study of religion with either Biblical literature or a survey of world religions.

Both the interdepartmental and departmental approaches for organizing religious studies programs at public universities and colleges have important strengths. The interdepartmental pattern encourages methodological and theoretical variety while departments of religious studies provide a formal

legitimacy of religious studies qua religious studies and a departmental structure for appointing faculty with training primarily in religion rather than in anthropology or other cognate areas. Fortunately, the choice of whether to have an interdepartmental program or a department is not an either-or decision. The existence of one does not exclude the possibility of the other; thus, a department of religious studies does not exclude the offering of courses in religion through cognate disciplines. Colleges that employ both the interdepartmental and departmental approaches are able to capitalize on the strengths of both. Put another way the approaches are complementary.

Religious studies programs in California's senior colleges are almost evenly divided between the departmental and interdepartmental approaches (see Table Four). Three university of California campuses have religious studies departments complemented by courses in religion offered by other departments (Davis, Riverside, and Santa Barbara), and three have interdepartmental programs (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Santa Cruz). The Irvine and San Diego campuses have neither departments nor coordinated interdepartmental programs but offer isolated courses such as the philosophy of religion.

TABLE FOUR

Programs in religious studies at University of California campuses.

campuses	relig. st. programs or depts.	courses identified as relig. st. in catalogues	program primarily in dept. of relig. studies	program primarily inter-depart-mental	B.A. in relig. studies
Berkeley	yes	yes	no	yes	*yes
Davis	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Irvine	no	no	no	no	no
Los Angeles	yes	no	no	yes	yes
Riverside	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Santa Barbara	yes	yes	yes	no	** yes
Santa Cruz	yes	no	no	yes	yes
San Diego	no	no	no	no	no

* B.A. in religious studies part of a group major
** also grant M.A. and Ph.d. in religious studies

In the state college and university system, seven campuses have departments including a joint department of philosophy and religious studies at California State at Bakersfield (see Table Five). Six campuses have formalized interdepartmental programs and two, California State University at Fresno and California Poly at Pomona, have intradepartmental religious studies concentrations in philosophy. In addition, California State University at Sonoma which has no formal program offers several courses in religion including a history course in Islam and psychology courses in the psychology of Zen and the psychology of religion.

TABLE FIVE

Programs in religious studies at the California State Colleges and Universities

campuses	relig. st. programs or depts.	courses identified as relig. studies	program primarily in dept. of relig. studies	program primarily interdept.	B.A. in relig. studies	Comments
Bakersfield	yes	yes	*yes	no	yes	*joint dept. of Philosophy and religious studies
Chico	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	
Dominquez Hills	yes	no	no	yes	*no	*minor in relig. studies
Fresno	yes	no	no	*no	*no	*philosophy major with religious studies emphasis
Fullerton	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	
Hayward	yes	no	no	yes	*no	*minor in relig. studies
Humboldt	yes	yes	yes	no	*no	*interdepartmental concentration in relig. st.
Los Angeles	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Long Beach	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	
Northridge	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	
Pomona	*no	no	no	no	no	*nine courses in religion available through philosoph
Sacramento	yes	no	no	yes	*no	*interdept. minor in religious studies
San Bernardino	yes	no	no	yes	*no	*certificate in relig. st.
San Diego	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	
San Francisco	no	no	no	no	no	
San Jose	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	
San Luis Obispo	no	no	no	no	no	
Sonoma	*no	no	no	no	no	*religion courses available
Stanislaus	yes	no	no	yes	*no	*minor in relig. studies

Although departments of religious studies are becoming common in the senior colleges, only 9 of the 101 California community colleges have departments or programs with courses explicitly listed in their catalogues as religious studies. They are Chabot, Crafton Hills, Grossmont, Orange Coast, Palomar, Pasadena, San Bernardino Valley, Santa Monica, and Victor Valley. This is, however, a change from 1963-64 when there were none and 1972-73 when there were three (Crafton Hills, Grossmont, San Bernardino Valley). Each of the community colleges with formalized departments or programs in religious studies complement their explicitly designated courses in religious studies with courses in religion offered by other departments or programs. The overwhelming majority, 88 California community colleges, have interdepartmental rather than departmental programs; thus, while nearly every college offers courses in religion, such courses have usually been initiated by departments operating independently rather than through a coordinated, formalized religious studies program. Table Six indicates that philosophy departments closely followed by English are the primary structures that offer community college courses in religion.

TABLE SIX

Distribution of the number of departments or programs offering courses in religious studies in California's community colleges.

Departments or programs	1963-64 survey of 71 schools	1972-73 survey of 93 schools	1980-81 survey of 101 schools
Philosophy	24	64	80
English	3	26	58
History	7	14	19
Anthropology	0	1	15
Religious Studies	0	3	9
Humanities/Social Sciences/Inter-discipline Studies	2	12	23
Ethnic Studies/ Black Studies	0	1	2
Jewish Studies/ Judaica	0	0	5
Sociology	0	0	1

The ninety-seven community colleges with courses in religious studies average 3.5 courses per school ranging from those like Barstow and Compton that offer a single course in world religions to those such as DeAnza, Grossmont, Los Angeles Valley, and Moorpark with nine courses each. Only Cuyamaca, Feather River, Sierra, and Solano offer none. Interestingly, the community colleges with departments or courses identified as religious studies offer, on an average, significantly more courses in religion than do those colleges

that have exclusively interdepartmental programs. The nine colleges with departments or courses designated in their catalogues as religious studies list 57 courses for an average of 6.3 per school while the 88 colleges with exclusively interdepartmental programs catalogue 287 courses for an average of 3.2 per school.[13]

New Directions

A new direction of religious studies, a direction not reflected in the 1972-73 survey of California community colleges, is the emergence of departments or programs in Jewish Studies or Judaica. Six campuses now have courses of study or departments variously entitled Jewish Studies, Judaica, or Hebrew Studies. Professor Zev Garber pioneered a department of Jewish Studies at Los Angeles Valley College. The department offers a range of courses including those that are specifically in religious studies such as the Jewish Religious Heritage and the Talmud as well as courses such as Jews in America, Hebrew Literature, and Hebrew Civilization that address both secular and sacred dimensions of the Jewish experience. Other colleges with Jewish Studies include East Los Angeles, Los Angeles City College, Los Angeles Harbor, Los Angeles Pierce, and Palomar. In addition to Judaica, four colleges (De Anza, Laney, Delta, and Ventura) have developed ethnic studies courses in religion. The focus has been on the Black religious experience. Comparable

courses on Native American and Chicano religious traditions have been slow in developing.

Two other trends deserve notice. In the process of expanding from a very restricted group of religion courses in 1963-64 to a broader and varied range in 1980-81, new courses have been introduced that blur the distinction between the preparatory and survey character of lower division courses and the advanced and specialized character of upper division courses. Thus, in addition to community college survey courses that parallel lower division ones at the senior colleges, there are such atypical lower division courses as Sexism in Traditional Philosophy and Religion, Bioanthropology of Religious Experience, Sociology of Religion, and Archeology of the Holy Land. Of course the blurring of distinction between lower and upper division coursework has occurred at the senior colleges as well and is neither unique to religious studies nor the community colleges. Since specialized courses at the community colleges reflect either a particularized community need such as ethnic studies or a specialization of individual faculty, they are likely to remain localized.

A second trend is the emergence of courses that introduce students to contemporary religious movements and issues. This is both a reflection of religious pluralism including the emergence of a phenomenal number of new religions and the natural insistence that courses of study be relevant, an

insistence that sometimes falls into the trap of equating relevancy with contemporaneousness. Many of these courses are survey in nature and afford students and faculty an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the new religions as well as engage in an examination of current issues. In addition to survey courses, there are specialized ones such as Yoga: Theory and Practice, Introduction to Meditation, and Introduction to Transcendental Meditation and Creative Intelligence, the latter offered by a department of psychology,[14] with course descriptions that suggest a crossing over from theoretical and informative inquiry into modes of religious beliefs and practices to experiential exercises and yogic disciplines that promise personal well being. Ironically as Christian studies have given way to religious studies and the courts have sanctioned studies of religion in public schools if they are informative rather than transformational or confessional, disguised forms of religious practice may have occasionally found their way into the curricula at public colleges.

Religious Studies at San Bernardino Valley College

Another way of bringing community college programs in religious studies into focus is to shift attention from their state or nationwide status to a closer examination of the one I am most familiar with. San Bernardino Valley College's program was formally initiated in 1970 when the philosophy department was expanded to include religious studies. A

five course curriculum was initiated which included an Introduction to Religious Studies, Religions of the East, Religions of the West, Literature and Religion of the Bible, and Religion in America. Two of the courses, Biblical literature and Religion in America, were and remain cross-disciplinary, a cooperative effort of religious studies with the departments of English and History respectively. Additional courses have been added including Primitive Religions, jointly offered by religious studies and anthropology, Jesus and His Interpreters, and Selected Topics in Religion. The latter course structure has allowed us to offer more specialized subjects such as Judaism in America, History of Christianity, Black Religious Experience in America, and Native American Religions.

Like many other campuses in the late seventies, San Bernardino Valley College has had its share of constriction pains including both a collegewide drop in enrollment and a swing of students from traditional academic majors to career opportunities in business, vocational, and para-professional areas. Valley College began the seventies with 6648 day students and ended the decade with 7012 in the fall of 1979. While the figures for the decade reflect a net growth, a fact that should

temper our gloom, they are deceptive. From my initial year at Valley College in 1963, when there were 3370 day students enrolled, until the fall of 1975, when 8341 day students matriculated, there was a steady increase in the student body. This pattern of growth was reversed for the first time in 1976 when enrollment dropped from 8341 to 7854 and continued to decrease through 1979 when 7012 enrolled, a figure some 1300 students below the number enrolled in 1975.

In addition to the negative effects of a decline in numbers of students, the shift of students toward business and paraprofessional studies is evident in changes in the ratio of classes that our joint department of philosophy and religious studies offers per number of day students. In our first year with courses designated as religious studies, the department offered nine day classes in philosophy and five in religious studies for a ratio of one departmental day class for every 474 day students enrolled. From 1971-75, a period corresponding to an overall growth in the student population at the college, the department's ratio of classes per students dropped from 474 in 1970 to an average of one class for every 363 students. Clearly philosophy and religious studies classes were in demand. As we begin the eighties, the department's ratio of classes per total number of day students is one class for every 476 students, a figure almost

identical to that with which we inaugurated the seventies, but a figure that indicates Valley College students are no longer as likely to take a class in philosophy or religious studies. It is probable that the change in ratios is, in part, a reflection of the shift of students from majors and courses in the humanities to majors and courses with more viable career opportunities.

The impact of a collegewide drop in enrollment and an internal shift of students to career education is evident in religious studies. Day classes offered in religious studies have been reduced from a high of ten sections in the fall of 1975 to six sections in the fall of 1980, a reduction that represents a loss of 4/5ths of a faculty teaching position. In our "salad days" the department added two full-time faculty to an existing two person department; however, because of enrollment losses during the period 1976-80, the four of us remain fully engaged in teaching by virtue of combining day and evening classes and by dropping part-time faculty.

TABLE SEVEN

Ratio of classes in philosophy and religious studies per number of day students at San Bernardino Valley College at selected years from 1963-1980

Year	Day Enrollment Fall Semester	Philosophy sections	Relig. St. sections	Ratio of Classes to Students
1963	3370	4	0	842
1965	4564	7	0	652
1968	5465	9	0	607
1970	6648	9	5	474
1972	*6062	10	8	336
1975	8341	10	10	417
1977	7345	11	8	386
1980	7145	9	6	476

*Decline in enrollment reflects the opening of a second campus, Crafton Hills College, and not a loss of students in the District.

Based on the criteria of courses offered and students enrolled, we have learned, at least for the seventies, that reversal is not only the rhythm of the Tao but of religious studies programs as well. Quantitatively speaking, the seventies at Valley Collegehas been a decade of contrasts, of growth and decline, of ascents and descents, that has left us at its end at roughly the same point that we began. Our faculty, however, is older and suffers from having no immediate prospects of being stimulated by new faculty appointments. Of late we are likely to grouse about poorly prepared students and a general decline of literacy---a condition we hope to ameliorate by rallying to a restoration of standards. We are anxious about the future of our world and our profession and hope that population demographics will cushion us from a reversal that might take us back to the enrollments of the early sixties.

Our religious studies faculty is Protestant, caucasion, and male. It can be described as theologically liberal, ecumenical in spirit, and sensitive to non-Christian traditions. Its composition and backgrounds reflect the general rule rather than the exception among community college faculty in religious studies.[15] In the fall of 1980, four full and one part-time faculty were engaged in the program. Four of us received our formal training in religion at Protestant colleges. In this respect, our preparation for teaching religion in public colleges parallels that of senior college faculty whose odyssey, at least in the formative period of religious studies programs at public colleges, usually led through church related colleges, seminary, and often the ministry before they secured a perching place or religious studies chair in a secular context. While senior college faculties in religious studies in public institutions are moving away from being Protestant, caucasion, male preserves to a more religiously, racially, and sexually integrated faculty, constricted budgets and "steady-state" enrollments make it likely that Valley College's religion faculty will continue for sometime to be exclusively white, male, and Protestant.

The majority of students at Valley College are preparing for careers that do not demand traditional academic majors. While we have two or three religion majors each

year who transfer to senior colleges, our place in the curriculum is directly tied to graduation requirements in the humanities that students satisfy by completing courses they have voluntarily selected from options in art, music, literature, history, philosophy, and religious studies.

Students have interesting responses to the possibility of taking a course in religious studies. Some respond with a haughty disdain and a distrust of things religious that suggests such a study is either intellectually unworthy or implicitly confessional. Others naively assume that such courses will, like medicine, be good for them. They are often disappointed when they are required to think as well as feel. Conservative Christians, particularly in Bible courses, often come expecting a validation of their biblical hermeneutics and their faith. Responses vary. Some are hostile. Others are willing to master a tad of biblical criticism if only to unmask "false teachers." Others, like David Lurie in Chaim Potok's In The Beginning, embrace the arduous task of integrating their faith and the new-learning:

> I will go wherever the truth leads me. . . .
> In secular scholarship there are no boundaries
> and no permanently fixed views.[16]

As the eighties begin, I am not disturbed that campus programs are touched by shifts and cross-currents in society.

It has ever been so. I continue to be quietly optimistic about students and teaching. And, in spite of a personal mind-set that vacillates between apocalyptic visions of a world come unraveled, visions fed by an apprehension of a nuclear holocaust, I am hopeful that when 1990 comes 'round, Yeats' slouching beast will not have found its way to Bethlehem to be born and that civilization, including higher education, will remain.

Notes

1. Claude Welch, Religion in the Undergraduate Curriculum (Washington D.C.: The Association of American Colleges, 1972), p. 53.

2. Terry Marre, "What Price Humanities?" (Sacramento, CA: Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, 1980), pp 3-4.

3. Gerald R. Kissler, "The Decline of Transfer Education?" FACCC Bulletin (Sacramento, CA: Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, December, 1980), pp. 2-3.

4. see The Humanities in Two-Year Colleges: Trends in Curriculum (Los Angeles: ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, 1978) for evidence of a nationwide decline in most areas of the humanities including religious studies and philosophy.

5. John Hick, God And The Universe Of Faiths (London: Macmillan, 1973), pp. 120-148.

6. Data from the 1956-57 and 1963-64 surveys was compiled by Louise Stoltenberg and is published in Charles S. McCoy's Religion and Western Values: Resources For Junior College Teaching (California Junior College Association, 1965), pp. 5-6.

7. for more details of the 1972-73 survey see Roger Schmidt, "The Teaching of Religion in California's Community Colleges," (Council on the Study of Religion Bulletin, Oct., 1973), pp. 3-7. The figures reported in the Bulletin for 1972-73 are higher than those reported here because courses in mythology were treated as religious studies in the original survey. Since nationwide surveys by Claude Welch in 1970-71 and by C. Freeman Sleeper and Robert A. Spivey in 1972-73 excluded mythology in their tabulations, they are excluded here to make the data of the surveys more comparable. When mythology classes are included the figures for 1972-73, 86 of 93 colleges or 92.4% offered 178 courses including 19 in mythology for an average of 2.0 religious studies per institution. When mythology classes are added to the 1980-81 figures they read: 97 of 101 colleges or 96% (the same as the figures without mythology) offered 395 courses including 55 in mythology for an average of 4.0 courses per college. Catalogue descriptions indicate that mythology courses are likely to introduce students to sacred myths and to anthropological and theological modes of analyzing them;

thus, such classes are still another way of engaging in religious studies.

8. Claude Welch, op. cit., pp. 77-79.

9. C. Freeman Sleeper and Robert A. Spivey, The Study of Religion in Two-Year Colleges (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975), pp. 15-22.

10. examples of other courses include Sociology of Religion, Religion in Literature, Great Issues in Psychology, Philosophy, and Religion, Archeology of the Holy Land, and Sexism in Traditional Philosophy and Religion.

11. see Welch, op. cit., pp 77-79 and Sleeper and Spivey, op. cit., pp 15-22.

12. for information and outlines of first or introductory courses in religion see Sleeper and Spivey, pp 35-48 and Welch, pp 90-94.

13. Welch's study found that interdepartmental programs in religious studies are less likely to prosper than departmental ones. See Welch, op. cit., p. 63.

14. The 1980-81 survey of California's community colleges does not include several courses that are closely related to religious studies. Courses not tabulated include those in mythology, two courses in what might be regarded as the psychology of religion (Transcendental Meditation and Creative Intelligence, and Introduction to Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology), several courses in Death and Dying that examine religious beliefs about human destiny, and courses in ethics that usually mention religious ethics.

15. Florence B. Brawer, "Who Teaches Religious Studies in Two-Year Colleges?", Bulletin (October, 1976), pp 1-3.

16. Chaim Potok, In The Beginning (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1975), p. 415.

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